

Sūrah Az-Zukhruf

The Gold

Sūrah Az-Zukhruf is Makkī. It has 89 Verses and 7 Sections

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِیْمِ

With the name of Allah, the All-Merciful, the Very-Merciful

Verses 1 - 8

حَمَّ ﴿١﴾ وَالْكِتَابِ الْمُبِينِ ﴿٢﴾ إِنَّا جَعَلْنَاهُ قُرْءَانًا عَرَبِيًّا لَّعَلَّكُمْ تَعْقِلُونَ ﴿٣﴾ وَإِنَّهُ فِي أُمِّ الْكِتَابِ لَدَيْنَا لَعَلَىٰ حَكِيمٍ ﴿٤﴾ أَفَنَضْرِبُ عَنْكُمْ الذِّكْرَ صَفْحًا أَنْ كُنْتُمْ قَوْمًا مُّسْرِفِينَ ﴿٥﴾ وَكَمْ أَرْسَلْنَا مِنْ نَبِيِّ فِي الْأَوَّلِينَ ﴿٦﴾ وَمَا يَأْتِيهِمْ مِنْ نَبِيٍّ إِلَّا كَانُوا بِهِ يَسْتَهْزِءُونَ ﴿٧﴾ فَأَهْلَكْنَا أَشَدَّ مِنْهُمْ بَطْشًا وَ مَضَىٰ مَثَلُ الْأَوَّلِينَ ﴿٨﴾

Hā Mīm. [1] By the manifest Book, [2] We have made it an Arabic Qur'an, so that you may understand. [3] And it is, in the Mother of the Book (the Preserved Tablet) with us, surely sublime, full of wisdom. [4] Shall We remove the advice away from you because you are a transgressing people? [5] And how many a messenger have We sent to the earlier people! [6] And no messenger came to them, but they used to mock at him. [7] So We have destroyed those who were stronger than these (people of Makkah) in power, and the example of the earlier people has already passed. [8]

Commentary

This Sūrah is Makkī, although Muqātil عليه السلام has said that the verse وَأَسْفَلُ مَنْ أَرْسَلْنَا (43:45) is Madanī, and according to another view, this

Sūrah was revealed in Heaven during *Lailat-ul-Mi'rāj* (the Night of Ascention) (Rūḥ-ul-Ma'ānī) - Allah knows best.

Hā Mīm- Only Allah knows its meaning.

وَالكِتَابِ الْمُبِينِ (By the manifest Book - 43:2) The book in this verse refers to the Holy Qur'ān. Whenever Allah swears by anything, it is usually an argument for the statement that follows. Swearing by the Qur'ān in this verse is an indication that the Qur'ān, by virtue of being a miracle, is a proof in itself of its being a Divine Book. To call it a 'manifest book' means that its subjects consisting of exhortations and advices are easily understandable; but as far as deduction of the precepts of 'Sharī'ah' is concerned, it certainly is a difficult job which cannot be performed without complete capability of '*ijtihād*'. This point has been clarified in Sūrah Alqamar, verse 17, وَلَقَدْ يَسَّرْنَا الْقُرْآنَ لِلذِّكْرِ فَهَلْ مِنْ مُدَكِّرٍ (And indeed We have made the Qur'ān easy for seeking advice. So, is there one to seek advice? - 54-17). Here, it has been stated that the Qur'ān is easy for obtaining advice. Hence, it does not necessarily follow that *ijtihād* and inferring injunctions will be easy also; rather, it is proved through other evidences that full expertise in related subjects is a necessary condition for this exercise.

A Preacher must not give up his preaching due to disappointment

أَفَنَضْرِبُ عَنْكُمْ الذِّكْرَ صَفْحًا أَنْ كُنْتُمْ قَوْمًا مُسْرِفِينَ (Shall we remove the advice away from you because you are a transgressing people? - 43:5) The meaning is that We will not give up advising you through the Qur'ān, no matter how rebellious and disobedient you may become. This tells us that the person who is engaged in preaching and inviting others towards Islam should carry the message to everybody; he must not give up preaching to some people or any group simply because they are non-believers, highly irreligious, sinners and transgressors.

Verses 9 - 25

وَلَيْنُ سَأَلْتَهُمْ مَنْ خَلَقَ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ لَيَقُولُنَّ خَلَقَهُنَّ الْعَزِيزُ
الْعَلِيمُ ﴿٩﴾ الَّذِي جَعَلَ لَكُمْ الْأَرْضَ مَهْدًا وَجَعَلَ لَكُمْ فِيهَا سُبُلًا

لَعَلَّكُمْ تَهْتَدُونَ ﴿١٠﴾ وَالَّذِي نَزَّلَ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ مَاءً ۖ بِقَدَرٍ فَأَنْشَرْنَا
 بِهِ بَلْدَةً مَّيْتًا ۚ كَذَلِكَ تُخْرَجُونَ ﴿١١﴾ وَالَّذِي خَلَقَ الْأَزْوَاجَ كُلَّهَا
 وَجَعَلَ لَكُمْ مِنَ الْأَنْعَامِ مَا تَرْكَبُونَ ﴿١٢﴾ لَيْسَتُوا عَلَى
 ظَهْرِهِ ثُمَّ تَذَكَّرُوا نِعْمَةً رَبِّكُمْ إِذَا اسْتَوَيْتُمْ عَلَيْهِ وَتَقُولُوا سُبْحَانَ
 الَّذِي سَخَّرْنَا هَذَا وَمَا كُنَّا لَهُ مُقْرِنِينَ ﴿١٣﴾ وَإِنَّا إِلَىٰ رَبِّنَا لَمُنْقَلِبُونَ
 ﴿١٤﴾ وَجَعَلُوا لَهُ مِنْ عِبَادِهِ جُزْءًا ۗ إِنَّ الْإِنْسَانَ لَكَفُورٌ مُّبِينٌ ﴿١٥﴾
 أَمْ اتَّخَذَ مِمَّا يَخْلُقُ بَنَاتٍ وَأَصْفَكُمْ بِالْبَنِينَ ﴿١٦﴾ وَإِذَا بُشِّرَ أَحَدُهُمْ
 بِمَا ضَرَبَ لِلرَّحْمَنِ مَثَلًا ظَلَّ وَجْهُهُ مُسْوَدًّا وَهُوَ كَظِيمٌ ﴿١٧﴾ أَوْ
 مَنْ يَنْشُرُوا فِي الْحِلْيَةِ وَهُوَ فِي الْخِصَامِ غَيْرُ مُبِينٍ ﴿١٨﴾ وَجَعَلُوا
 الْمَلَائِكَةَ الَّذِينَ هُمْ عِبُدُ الرَّحْمَنِ إِنَاثًا ۖ أَشْهَدُوا خَلْقَهُمْ ۖ سَتُكْتَبُ
 شَهَادَتُهُمْ وَيَسْتَلُونَ ﴿١٩﴾ وَقَالُوا لَوْ شَاءَ الرَّحْمَنُ مَا عَبَدْنَاهُمْ ۗ
 مَا لَهُمْ بِذَلِكَ مِنْ عِلْمٍ ۗ إِنْ هُمْ إِلَّا يَخْرُصُونَ ﴿٢٠﴾ أَمْ اتَّيْنَاهُمْ كِتَابًا
 مِنْ قَبْلِهِ فَهُمْ بِهِ مُسْتَمْسِكُونَ ﴿٢١﴾ بَلْ قَالُوا إِنَّا وَجَدْنَا آبَاءَنَا عَلَىٰ
 أُمَّةٍ وَإِنَّا عَلَىٰ آثَرِهِمْ مُهْتَدُونَ ﴿٢٢﴾ وَكَذَلِكَ مَا أَرْسَلْنَا مِنْ قَبْلِكَ
 فِي قَرْيَةٍ مِّنْ نَّذِيرٍ إِلَّا قَالَ مُتْرَفُوهَا ۖ إِنَّا وَجَدْنَا آبَاءَنَا عَلَىٰ أُمَّةٍ وَإِنَّا
 عَلَىٰ آثَرِهِمْ مُّقْتَدُونَ ﴿٢٣﴾ قُلْ أَوَلَوْ جِئْتُكُمْ بِآهْدَىٰ مِمَّا وَجَدْتُمْ
 عَلَيْهِ آبَاءَكُمْ ۖ قَالُوا إِنَّا بِمَا أُرْسِلْتُمْ بِهِ كَافِرُونَ ﴿٢٤﴾ فَانْتَقَمْنَا مِنْهُمْ
 فَانظُرْ كَيْفَ كَانَ عَاقِبَةُ الْمُكذِّبِينَ ﴿٢٥﴾

And should you ask them as to who has created the heavens and the earth, they will certainly say, "They are created by the All-Mighty, the All-Knowing," [9] the One who has made the earth a cradle for you, and has made for you pathways therein, so that you may be guided, [10] and the One who has sent down water from the sky in due measure, then We have revived with it a dead

town. — In the same way, you will be brought out (alive from the graves), [11] – and the One who has created all the pairs, and has made for you the boats and the cattle that you ride, [12] so that you may mount on their backs, then recall the favour of your Lord after having mounted on it and say, 'Pure is the One who has subjugated this for us, and We were not able to have control over it, [13] and of course, towards our Lord we have to return.' [14]

And they have ascribed to Him (that He is composed of parts, (and that too) out of His slaves. Surely, man is openly ungrateful. [15] Is it that He has adopted daughters from those whom He has created, and chosen you for (having) sons? [16] And when one of them is given the good news of (the birth of) that which he has claimed to be like *Raḥmān* (i.e. the daughters), his face turns black, and he becomes choked with sorrow. [17] Is it that (Allah has chosen) those (as His offspring) who are grown up in ornaments, and who cannot express themselves in debate clearly? [18] And they have held angels, who are the slaves of the *Raḥmān*, as females. Have they witnessed their creation? Their testimony will be recorded, and they will be questioned. [19] And they say, "Had the *Raḥmān* so willed, we will not have worshipped them." They have no knowledge of that. They do nothing but make conjectures. [20] Or have We given to them a book before this, and they are adhering to it? [21] Instead, they say, "We have found our fathers on a certain way, and we are on their footprints, fully guided." [22] And similarly, We did not send a warner to a town before you, but its affluent people said, "We have found our fathers on a certain way, and we are following their footprints." [23] He said, "Even if I bring to you something better in guidance than that on which you have found your fathers?" They said, "We totally disbelieve in what you are sent with." [24] So, We took revenge from them. Now look, how was the end of those who rejected (Our messengers). [25]

Commentary

جَعَلَ لَكُمْ الْأَرْضَ مَهْدًا (has made the earth a cradle for you - 10) meaning that the comfort provided by the earth is that of a cradle; its apparent look of being a plain floor does not negate its being spherical.

وَجَعَلَ لَكُمْ مِنَ الْفُلْكِ وَالْأَنْعَامِ مَا تَرْكَبُونَ (and has made for you the boats and the

cattle that you ride, - 12). There are two kinds of means of transport employed by man - one those vehicles which are made by man himself, and two the animals in whose creation human effort is not involved at all. 'Boats' include all kinds of man-made vehicles, and 'cattle' include all the animals used for riding. Both these means of transport are great blessings of Allah Ta'ālā. That cattle are Allah's great blessings is obvious, because despite their being many times stronger than man, Allah Almighty has made them so submissive to him that even a child leads them to wherever he wants through a halter or mor-string. Similarly the man made vehicles, right from the bicycles to the aeroplanes and the space-crafts are also great blessings of Allah Almighty, because they are, though, made by man apparently, there is no other than Allah Ta'ālā who has provided man with ability and techniques to manufacture them? Allah Almighty, the All-Powerful is the One Who has endowed the human intellect with the power that moulds iron like wax. And besides, all the raw materials used in their manufacturing and their properties are direct creations of Allah Almighty.

ثُمَّ تَذَكَّرُوا نِعْمَةَ رَبِّكُمْ (then recall the favour of your Lord - 13). This tells us that a sensible and alert person should not display negligence, carelessness or his need-free of the divine help while enjoying the blessings of the Actual Benefactor, rather he should acknowledge that it is a reward from Allah Almighty, obliging him to be grateful and to display his impotence and humility. Actually this is the difference between an infidel and a *Mu'min* that an infidel uses the good things of this world carelessly and negligently, while the *Mu'min* cognizant of the blessings of Allah bows his head to Allah Almighty in humility. It is for this reason that the Qur'ān and *ḥadīth* have taught supplications for patience, steadfastness and gratefulness, and if anyone makes a habit of supplicating those prayers in his daily life while getting up, sitting down, walking about, etc., then all his (or hers) permissible activities turn into acts of worship. These supplications are collected by 'Allāmah Ibn-ul-Jazrī in his book *Al-Ḥisn-ul-Ḥaṣīn*, and Maulānā Thanawī in *Munajat-e-Maqbūl*.

Supplications of a traveler

سُبْحَانَ الَّذِي سَخَّرْنَا هَذَا (Pure is the One who has subjugated this for us - 13). These words of supplication are to be said when mounting a transport.

This was the practice of the Holy Prophet ﷺ according to many narrations. The *mustahab* (preferable) way to ride a transport, as stated by Sayyidnā 'Alī رضي الله عنه, is to say بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ 'Bismillāh' (With the name of Allah) when one is putting the first foot on the animal or the vehicle, and after one has set himself or herself on the transport, one should say اَلْحَمْدُ لِلّٰهِ 'Alḥamdulillāh' (All praise belongs to Allah), and then one should say the words mentioned in this verse from سُبْحٰنَ الَّذِى سَخَّرَلَنَا upto لَمُنْقَلِبُوْنَ (Qurṭubī). Moreover according to some reports, the Holy Prophet ﷺ, after saying these words, used to supplicate in the following words also:

اللَّهُمَّ أَنْتَ الصَّاحِبُ فِي السَّفَرِ وَالْخَلِيفَةُ فِي الْأَهْلِ وَالْمَالِ اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَعُوذُ بِكَ مِنْ
وَعَثَاءِ السَّفَرِ وَكَآبَةِ الْمُنْقَلَبِ، وَالْحَوْرِ بَعْدَ الْكُورِ وَسُوءِ الْمَنْظَرِ فِي الْأَهْلِ وَالْمَالِ.

"O Allah, you are my companion in the journey, and my substitute for my family. O Allah, I seek your refuge from the sufferings of the journey, and from coming back in a sad situation, and from a bad state of being after a good one, and from a bad scenario appearing to me about my family and my belongings."

According to one narration, the following words are added to the above supplication,

اللَّهُمَّ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا أَنْتَ ظَلَمْتُ نَفْسِي فَاغْفِرْ لِي إِنَّهُ لَا يَغْفِرُ الذُّنُوبَ إِلَّا أَنْتَ

O Allah, there is no god but You. I have done wrong to myself; so forgive me. Surely, no one can forgive the sins, but You alone. (Qurṭubī)

مَنْ كُنَّا لَهُ مُفْرَيْنَ (and we were not able to have control over it - 13). This statement is as true for mechanical means of transport as for cattle and animals, because if Allah Ta'ālā had not created their raw materials, or had not endowed them with their particular properties, or had not endowed the human intellect with capability to discover those properties, even the whole universe, acting together in unison, could not have produced these vehicles.

وَأَنَا إِلَى رَبِّنَا لَمُنْقَلِبُونَ (and of course, towards our Lord we have to return - 14). These words teach us that every time a man embarks on a journey, he should think of his last arduous journey to the Hereafter also, which one has to undertake in all circumstances; – and the only way to make it easy is to have a vehicle of good deeds.

وَجَعَلُوا لَهُ مِنْ عِبَادِهِ جُزْءًا (And they have attributed to Him [that He is composed of] parts [and that too] out of His slaves...43:15) 'parts' in this verse means 'offspring', because the polytheists used to say that angels are daughters of Allah, and by using the word 'parts' instead of 'offspring' the fallacy of their claim has been pointed out on pure logical ground. The gist of the argument is that had Allah any offspring, that offspring will have been His part, because a son is a part of his father, and it is a rule of logic that an entity that consists of parts is dependent upon its parts for its full existence. This will then necessarily mean that Allah Ta'ālā is also dependent on His offspring, which is obviously impossible, because dependence of any kind, being a negation of the Divine Majesty, is out of question in Allah's case.

أَوَمَنْ يُنَشَأُ فِي الْحِلْيَةِ (Is it that (Allah has chosen) those (as His offspring) who are grown up in ornaments,... 43:18). This tells us that use of ornaments and adornment in accordance with 'Shari'ah is permissible for women. As such, there is consensus on this issue, but at the same time the manner of speech indicates that getting so much involved in adornment that one is busy in it the whole day long, is not proper; it is not only a symptom of one's being short-sighted, but also a cause of it.

وَهُوَ فِي الْخِصَامِ غَيْرُ مُبِينٍ (and who cannot express themselves in debate clearly - 18). This reflects the reality that a great majority of women do not have the same ability as men to express their feelings clearly. Therefore, if it comes to argumentation, it is difficult for them to prove their own contention and to refute the other's arguments in a clear manner. But this applies to the majority. If some women are eloquent in their speech and excel even men in this regard, it does not go against this verse, because the rule applies to the majority, and not to every single individual.

Verses 26 - 30

وَإِذْ قَالَ إِبْرَاهِيمُ لِأَبِيهِ وَقَوْمِهِ إِنَّنِي بَرَاءٌ مِمَّا تَعْبُدُونَ ﴿٢٦﴾ إِلَّا الَّذِي
فَطَرَنِي فَإِنَّهُ سَيَهْدِينِ ﴿٢٧﴾ وَجَعَلَهَا كَلِمَةً بَاقِيَةً فِي عَقْبِهِمْ لَعَلَّهُمْ
يَرْجِعُونَ ﴿٢٨﴾ بَلْ مَتَّعْتُ هَؤُلَاءِ وَأَبَاءَهُمْ حَتَّىٰ جَاءَهُمُ الْحَقُّ

وَرَسُولٌ مُّبِينٌ ﴿٢٩﴾ وَلَمَّا جَاءَهُمُ الْحَقُّ قَالُوا هَذَا سِحْرٌ وَإِنَّا بِهِ
كٰفِرُونَ ﴿٣٠﴾

And (recall) when Ibrāhīm said to his father and to his people, "I disown that which you worship, [26] except the One who has originated me; so He will guide me." [27] And he made it a word lasting among his posterity, so that they may return. [28] But, I gave these and their fathers enjoyment, until the truth came to them, and a messenger who explains (it). [29] And when the truth came to them, they said, "This is magic, and we totally disbelieve in it." [30]

Commentary

وَإِذْ قَالَ إِبْرَاهِيمُ (And [recall] when Ibrāhīm said to his father and to his people,..... 43:26) At the end of the previous verses, Allah Ta'ālā had stated that the '*mushrikīn*' (polytheists) of Arabia had no argument in favour of their '*shirk*' (polytheism) except that they were carrying on the customs of their forefathers. Obviously, sticking to such customs against logical and historical arguments is far from truth and justice. Now the point made in the present verses is that, even if they are adamant on following their ancestors, why do they not follow Sayyidnā Ibrāhīm عليه السلام who is the most noble of their ancestors, and it is taken by themselves as a matter of pride to be among his offspring. He was not only a believer in '*tauḥīd*' (Oneness of Allah) who emphatically directed all his children to remain adherent to this belief, but his life-long behavior also indicates that following forefathers against logical and historical proofs is not permissible. When he was ordained prophethood in the world, all his people were polytheists in pursuit of the customs of their forefathers, but he, instead of blindly following his forefathers, announced his dissociation from his people, according to the dictates of positive proofs; hence his declaration: إِنِّي بَرَاءٌ مِّمَّا تَعْبُدُونَ "I disown that which you worship" (43:26).

We find from this verse that if anyone lives among a group or people who are misguided or involved in bad deeds, and his silence about their attitude may be construed as being agreeable to them, then it is not enough for him to simply correct his own beliefs and deeds, rather he has to disown their beliefs and deeds as well. This is what Sayyidnā Ibrāhīm عليه السلام did - he not only made his belief and actions distinctly different in

practice, but he also disowned their belief and deeds vocally.

وَجَعَلَهَا كَلِمَةً بَاقِيَةً فِي عَقْبِهِ (And he made it a word lasting among his posterity.) It means that Ibrāhīm ؑ did not keep the belief in 'tauḥīd' restricted to himself, rather he emphasized upon his posterity also to remain firm on this faith, as a result of which a large number of his posterity adhered to *tauḥīd*. In Makkah and its surroundings, there were many blessed souls, even till the advent of the Holy Prophet ﷺ, who had remained steadfast in the original 'dīn' of Sayyidnā Ibrāhīm ؑ.

We learn from this verse that it is one of the obligatory duties of a Muslim to try his best to put his or her children on the path of the correct religion and to make them practice it throughout their lives. The Holy Qur'ān tells us that Sayyidnā Yaqūb ؑ also had directed his sons, shortly before his death, to remain firm on the correct faith. As such, it is necessary, as a consistent practice of the prophets, to employ one's best possible efforts to reform the morals and deeds of his or her children. So to say, there are many ways to reform one's offspring which should be used according to the situation, but Shaikh Abdul Wahhāb Sha'rānī رحمه الله تعالى has said in his book *Laṭā'if-ul-Minan wal-Akhlāq* that the most effective way for the betterment of one's offspring in matters pertaining to 'dīn' is that the parents should pray to Allah regularly to make them true practicing Muslims. Alas! The negligence of parents from this easy way is becoming very common these days, and the parents themselves are witnessing the ill effects of this negligence.

Verses 31 - 32

وَقَالُوا لَوْلَا نُزِّلَ هَذَا الْقُرْآنُ عَلَى رَجُلٍ مِّنَ الْقَرْيَتَيْنِ عَظِيمٍ ﴿٣١﴾
 أَهْمُ يَقْسِمُونَ رَحْمَتَ رَبِّكَ ط نَحْنُ قَسَمْنَا بَيْنَهُمْ مَّعِيشَتَهُمْ فِي
 الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا وَرَفَعْنَا بَعْضَهُمْ فَوْقَ بَعْضٍ دَرَجَاتٍ لِّيَتَّخِذَ بَعْضُهُمْ
 بَعْضًا سَخِرِيًّا وَرَحْمَتُ رَبِّكَ خَيْرٌ مِّمَّا يَجْمَعُونَ ﴿٣٢﴾

And they say, "Why was this Qur'ān not revealed on a great man from (either of) the two towns?" [31] Is it they who distribute the mercy of your Lord? We have distributed among them their livelihood in the worldly

life, and have raised some of them over others in ranks, so that some of them may put some others to work. And the mercy of your Lord is much better than what they accumulate. [32]

Commentary

Allah Ta'ālā has in these verses, has replied to an objection of the pagans of Arabia used to be raised against the Holy Prophet ﷺ. Actually, they were not prepared to accept, at the first place, that a man could be a messenger of Allah Ta'ālā. The Holy Qur'an has referred, at many places, to their objection that they could not accept Sayyidnā Muhammad ﷺ as a messenger of Allah, while he eats and drinks and walks about in the market places like any ordinary man. When it was clarified through many verses of the Qur'an that not only the Holy Prophet ﷺ, but all the prophets who came to this world, were human beings, they started advancing another argument that if prophethood had to be bestowed upon a human being, why was it not given to some wealthy man of a high rank and position from Makkah or Ṭā'if instead of the Holy Prophet ﷺ who was not so wealthy? According to some narrations, they had proposed the names of Walīd Ibn Mughīrah and 'Utbah Ibn Rabī'ah from Makkah, and 'Urwah Ibn Mas'ūd Thaqaḫī, Ḥabīb Ibn 'Amr Thaqaḫī or Kinānah Ibn 'Abdiyālīl from Ṭā'if. (Rūḥ-ul-Ma'ānī)

Allah Almighty has given two answers to this objection. The second answer is found in the next verses which will be explained there, while the present verse (32) has provided the first answer in the words, "Is it they who distribute the mercy of your Lord?". "Mercy of your Lord" refers here to 'prophethood' and the gist of the answer is that appointing someone as a prophet is a mercy from Allah which he bestows upon and allocates to human beings on the basis of His absolute wisdom, and according to His exclusive discretion for which He needs not to consult anyone, nor has anyone a right to interfere with it. You have no concern with distribution of prophethood so that your advice should be sought before anyone is made a prophet. Your intellect and understanding is too deficient to be entrusted with selecting suitable persons for the office of prophethood, or for the distribution of this divine mercy among people. How can you distribute among people an office as high as prophethood, while you have no ability to distribute something that is much lower and easier, that is, your economy. You are not good enough even to carry out

the distribution of your wealth and means of sustenance. We know that if you are entrusted with this responsibility, you will not be able to manage it even for one day, and the whole system will simply collapse. That is why Allah Ta'ālā has not assigned the distribution of provisions in this world to you; rather He has kept it in His own hands. Since this comparatively ordinary work cannot be entrusted to you, how can a great job like distribution of prophethood be given in your hands?

This is what the above verses mean, but in the context of replying to the '*mushrikīn*', many economic principles are laid down and indications are given by Allah Ta'ālā regarding the economic system of the world; their brief explanation is necessary here.

The Natural system of Distribution of wealth

نَحْنُ قَسَمْنَا بَيْنَهُمْ مَعِيشَتَهُمْ (We have distributed among them their livelihood).

This is to say that Allah in His infinite wisdom, has devised such a system for the world that everybody is dependent on another for meeting his needs. Thus all the people, bound in this mutual inter-dependence, are fulfilling the needs of the whole society. This verse has made it quite clear that Allah Almighty has not assigned the work of distributing livelihood to any human organization or authority that works out a plan (as claimed by the socialist theory) how to define the needs of a society, how to meet those needs, how to allocate the means of production to various channels, and how to distribute the income, and on what basis. Instead, all these functions rest with Allah Ta'ālā. What it means is that by making every person dependent upon another, an automatic system has been developed that may solve these issues, with the only condition that it is not hindered by unnatural factors like monopolies etc. This system of mutual interdependence is known in modern economic terminology as the 'supply and demand mechanism'. The natural law of 'supply and demand' is that shortage in the supply of an item results in an increase in its price, and thus attracts more factors of production towards its production, so that they may earn more profit. But when the production outpaces the demand, its prices decrease, and so does the profit, thereby diverting the means of production towards more profitable items. Islam has employed this natural mechanism of supply and demand to produce and distribute wealth, and has not assigned the distribution of livelihood to any organization under ordinary circumstances. The reason is that human

planning, however advanced it may be, cannot take into account every element of human necessities; such social issues are usually resolved through a natural process that works in an automatic manner. If such problems are entrusted to human planning, it can only result in artificial restraints imposed on the natural human freedom. For example, the fact that the hours of daylight are for working, and the night is meant for sleeping was not determined by any social contract or by human planning; it came about through nature's automatic process. Similarly, who should marry whom is automatically arranged in accordance with the natural system of personal inclinations; nobody has even thought of arranging it through planning. If the question of selecting a particular field of academic specialization is entrusted to the planning of a government, instead of one's own inclination and taste, it will result in nothing but coercion and compulsion which may, in turn, disturb and spoil the natural human life. Similarly, the economic system is taken care of by Allah's wisdom and power; everybody knows in his heart what he wants to do, which job is more suitable for him, and which he can perform properly. As such, everybody, even if he is a sweeper, is happy loving his work, and is proud of it.

However, unlike capitalism, Islam has not given so much freedom to the individuals as allows them to accumulate wealth by any means, lawful or unlawful, and deprive others of their livelihood. Islam has therefore drawn a clear line between *ḥalāl* (permissible) and *ḥarām* (impermissible) sources of income. It has, on the one hand, totally prohibited usury or interest, speculative transactions, hoarding and gambling (which in its technical sense in Islamic law is much more general than its lexical meaning in English), and on the other hand, has levied *zakāh*, 'ushr, etc., even on permitted income. And thus Islam has closed the doors of those social ills that are found in the present day capitalistic system. If despite all this, monopolies are created at any time, government has been permitted to intervene and break them up. Details on this subject can be seen in the author's Urdu books on 'The Issue of Interest' 'Distribution of Wealth in Islam' and 'Economic Reforms in Islamic System'.

The truth about economic equality

وَرَفَعْنَا بَعْضَهُمْ فَوْقَ بَعْضٍ دَرَجَاتٍ (and have raised some of them over others in

ranks). This tells us that economic equality, in the sense that the income of all the individuals of this world should be equal, is neither desirable nor practically feasible. The reason is that Allah Ta'ālā has charged every member of this universe with some duties, and has given them rights in proportion to their obligations. All the creatures, excepting man, are liable for the least duties in the sense that there is nothing like lawful, unlawful or prohibited for them, and hence they have the least rights. Accordingly, man has been given vast freedom in dealing with them; he can use them in any way for his benefit, subject to some minor restrictions. He uses some animals as his food, some he rides and some creatures are trodden under his feet, but these things are not considered to be the denial of the rights of those creatures, because their duties are very few, hence their rights are also to that proportion. Human beings and jinns have been given more responsibilities in their duties than any other creature of this universe in that they are accountable to Allah Ta'ālā in each utterance, each deed each move and each movement; if they do not carry out their duties, they are liable to punishment in the Hereafter. That is the reason why Allah Ta'ālā has given much more rights to human beings and jinns as compared to other creatures. And then, even among human beings, those whose duties and obligations are more than others have been given more rights as well. As such, prophets عليهم السلام whose responsibilities exceed those of all other human beings, were given more rights than others in many respects.

The same principle has been applied by Allah Ta'ālā to the economic system also. Allah has given economic advantages and rights to anyone in accordance with his duties and obligations. It is obvious that equality in duties and obligations is not possible, and differences are unavoidable. It is simply not feasible that everybody's economic benefits i.e. income and duties be exactly equal, because they depend on one's natural abilities which include physical strength, health, intellectual power, age, level of intelligence, efficiency and quickness; it is obvious to everyone that it is beyond the capability of even the most advanced communist state to create homogeneity and equality among people in respect of these qualities. When differences in the abilities of human beings are unavoidable, there have to be differences in their economic duties. And since economic rights are linked with these duties, differences in economic

rights i.e. incomes are also unavoidable, because if everybody's income is made equal, while duties continue to be different, equity and justice cannot be established. It is now quite evident that complete equality in incomes can never be fair at any time. As such the communist claim that equality will be achieved in the ultimate stage of completion of communism, is neither practicable nor equitable.

To determine whose duties are more and whose are less and to determine their rights accordingly is an extremely sensitive and difficult task, and man does not have any perfect standard, as yet, to measure it. Sometimes one gets the feeling that an expert and experienced engineer has earned in only one hour what a common unskilled laborer could not, even by carrying tons of earth during the whole day. But in all fairness, one has to concede that the whole day's carefree hard work of the laborer just cannot match the burden of responsibility of the engineer. Besides, the income of the engineer is not compensation for only one hour's work, but it really is compensation partly for the exercise of the mind, burning of the mid-night oil and effort put in to get engineering education and training, and then in getting experience and expertise. In its early days, communism has accepted the differences in incomes and as such there are vast differences in the incomes of different categories of the populace in all the communist countries. But where they have slipped is that they have given control over all means of production to the government, thereby determination of duties and commensurate distribution of incomes has also come under the control of the government. As mentioned earlier, man does not have a perfect standard to measure that the rights are in accordance with one's duties; as such a few functionaries of the government in communist countries have the power to dole out, as much as they want, to any person and withhold, as much as they want from anyone. In the first place, such discretionary powers give rise to corruption, nepotism etc. Secondly, even if one presumes that all the functionaries of the government are angels, and they truly desire to distribute the incomes in the country according to the dictates of justice and equity, then what is the measure through which they may be able to determine the difference in the duties of an engineer and a laborer, and in that context what should be the difference between their incomes?

The fact is that the right decision in this matter is beyond human

understanding, and that is why it has been kept in the domain of nature. This is what Allah Ta'ālā has hinted at in the verse under discussion which says, "and have raised some of them over others in ranks". Instead of leaving human beings determine this difference, Allah Ta'ālā has kept it in His own hands in the sense that by associating others in the fulfillment of everyone's needs, a system has been developed where everyone is constrained to pay the other's rightful dues for the fulfillment of his own needs. Here also, the mechanism of supply and demand based upon mutual dependence, determines everybody's income. In other words, everyone determines for himself the compensation that is adequate for the responsibilities he has undertaken; if he is offered less than that, he will not agree, and if he demands more than that, the other person will not agree to get the work done by him. This is exactly what the verse says: "so that some of them may put some other to work.") meaning that Allah has made the incomes of the people different, so that one person may employ another; if their incomes had been the same, nobody will have been of use to another person.

Of course, in abnormal situations, big capitalists may take undue advantage of this natural system of supply and demand, and may compel poor people to work for lesser wages than their actual entitlement. In order to prevent this, Islam has, in the first place, given thorough injunctions of *ḥalāl* (lawful) and *ḥarām* (unlawful), and a wide-ranged code of ethics based on the concept of the Day of Retribution. But if at any time, such a situation does appear, then the Islamic government has been given an authority to determine the wages and salaries during those abnormal conditions. But this authorization is limited to the abnormal conditions, and there is no need to let the government have control of all means of production for this purpose, because its harm far outweighs its gains.

The Meaning of Islamic equality

It is quite clear from the above discussion that complete equality in incomes is neither a requirement of equity and justice, nor has it been actually established anywhere; It is not possible or desired in Islam either. Of course, the equality that Islam has established is in the matters of law, social behavior and in honoring the rights of everyone. What it means is that everybody is equal in exercising one's legal, civil and social rights for

obtaining his economic dues as determined by the natural system mentioned above. What it does not mean is that a rich man or a man of rank and position should obtain his right with ease and dignity, while a poor man has to knock on the doors and has to lose his respect and dignity to obtain his rights, or that the law should protect the rights of the rich, and leave the poor to fend for themselves. This kind of inequality is not tolerable in Islam, and this is what Sayyidnā Abū Bakr Ṣiddīq رضي الله عنه had said in one of his addresses:

وَاللَّهِ مَا عِنْدِي أَقْوَى مِنْ الضَّعِيفِ حَتَّى أَخَذَ الْحَقَّ لَهُ وَلَا عِنْدِي أضعفُ مِنَ الْقَوِيِّ
حَتَّى أَخَذَ الْحَقَّ مِنْهُ

"I swear by Allah that nobody is more forceful to me than a weak man until I cause his right to be given to him, and nobody is weaker than a powerful man till I obtain from him the right of the weak one."

Islamic equality, therefore, from the purely economic point of view means that everybody should have equal opportunities to earn livelihood, and Islam does not tolerate that a few wealthy persons should control and monopolize the sources of wealth whereas small traders should be unable to do business in the market place. By forbidding interest, speculative transactions, gambling, hoarding, monopolistic trade agreements, and by applying *zakāh*, *‘ushr*, *kharāj*, maintenance allowances, alms and other compulsory payments, an environment of freedom has been created in which every individual can get an opportunity of earning livelihood according to his ability, endeavor and investment. A prosperous society can be built upon this foundation. The differences in incomes which remain despite all this are actually unavoidable, and cannot be erased just as the differences in human beings in respect of beauty and elegance, health and vigor, sense and intelligence and offspring and progeny cannot be wiped out.

Verses 33 - 35

وَلَوْلَا أَنْ يَكُونَ النَّاسُ أُمَّةً وَاحِدَةً لَجَعَلْنَا لِمَنْ يَكْفُرُ بِالرَّحْمَنِ
لِئُيُوتِيَهُمْ سُقْفًا مِّنْ فِضَّةٍ وَمَعَارِجَ عَلَيْهَا يَظْهَرُونَ ﴿٣٣﴾ وَلِئُيُوتِيَهُمْ
أَبْوَابًا وَسُرَرًا عَلَيْهَا يَتَكَبَّرُونَ ﴿٣٤﴾ وَزُخْرَفًا وَإِنْ كُلُّ ذَلِكَ لَمَّا

مَتَاعُ الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا وَالْآخِرَةُ عِنْدَ رَبِّكَ لِلْمُتَّقِينَ ﴿٣٥﴾

And were it not that all people will become of a single creed (i.e. disbelief), We will have caused, for the benefit of those who disbelieve in Raḥmān, roofs of their houses to be made of silver, and the stairs as well, on which they will climb, [33] and doors of their homes, and the coaches on which they will recline, [34] and (will have made some of these things) of gold-ornaments. And all this is nothing but an enjoyment of the worldly life. And the Hereafter, with your Lord, is (destined) for the God-fearing. [35]

Commentary

Superiority is not based upon wealth and property

This is the second reply to the infidels of Makkah for their question why prophethood was not bestowed upon some very rich and wealthy person of Makkah or Ṭā'if? The gist of the answer is that some qualities and abilities are undoubtedly necessary for choosing someone as a prophet. But abundance of riches and wealth cannot be taken as the basis of this choice. Wealth and property are so worthless in Allah's view that if there was no apprehension of all the people becoming disbelievers, He will have showered gold and silver upon all the infidels. The Holy Prophet ﷺ has stated, in a *ḥadīth* reported by Tirmidhī,

لو كانت الدنيا تعدل عند الله جناح بعوضةٍ ماسقى كافراً منها شربة ماء

"If the worth of the whole world, in Allah's sight, had been equal to that of one wing of a mosquito, Allah Ta'ālā will not have given even one drop of water from this world to an infidel (kāfir)".

This tells us that neither abundance of wealth and property owned by someone can be a cause of his superiority, nor can one's poverty be taken as an indication of his being lower in rank. As for those excellent qualities which are necessary for prophethood, they are found in the Holy Prophet ﷺ, to their perfection. Their objection is, therefore, false and baseless.

The statement in these verses that if gold and silver had been showered upon all the infidels, all the people will have become disbelievers is meant for most of the people. Even today, there are people who are certain that if they become disbelievers, they will get abundance

of riches and wealth, but they do not lose their faith for the sake of wealth and property; such people will have remained steadfast to their belief and faith, perhaps even at that time, but the number of such people will have been very little indeed.

Verses 36 - 45

وَمَنْ يَعْشُ عَنْ ذِكْرِ الرَّحْمَنِ نُقَيِّضْ لَهُ شَيْطَانًا فَهُوَ لَهُ قَرِينٌ ﴿٣٦﴾
 وَإِنَّهُمْ لَيَصُدُّونَهُمْ عَنِ السَّبِيلِ وَيَحْسَبُونَ أَنَّهُمْ مُهْتَدُونَ ﴿٣٧﴾
 حَتَّىٰ إِذَا جَاءَنَا قَالَ يَلَيْتَ بَيْنِي وَبَيْنَكَ بُعْدَ الْمَشْرِقَيْنِ فَبِئْسَ
 الْقَرِينُ ﴿٣٨﴾ وَلَنْ يَنْفَعَكُمُ الْيَوْمَ إِذْ ظَلَمْتُمْ أَنَّكُمْ فِي الْعَذَابِ
 مُشْتَرِكُونَ ﴿٣٩﴾ أَفَأَنْتَ تُسْمِعُ الصُّمَّ أَوْ تَهْدِي الْعُمْىَ وَمَنْ كَانَ
 فِي ضَلَالٍ مُّبِينٍ ﴿٤٠﴾ فَمَا نَنْدُهَبَنَّ بِكَ فَإِنَّا مِنْهُمْ مُنْتَقِمُونَ ﴿٤١﴾
 أَوْ نُرِيَنَّكَ الَّذِي وَعَدْنَاهُمْ فَإِنَّا عَلَيْهِمْ مُّقْتَدِرُونَ ﴿٤٢﴾ فَاسْتَمْسِكْ
 بِالَّذِي أُوحِيَ إِلَيْكَ ۚ إِنَّكَ عَلَىٰ صِرَاطٍ مُسْتَقِيمٍ ﴿٤٣﴾ وَإِنَّهُ لَذِكْرٌ
 لَّكَ وَلِقَوْمِكَ ۚ وَسَوْفَ تُسْأَلُونَ ﴿٤٤﴾ وَسْئَلُ مَنْ أَرْسَلْنَا مِنْ قَبْلِكَ
 مِنْ رُسُلِنَا أَجَعَلْنَا مِنْ دُونِ الرَّحْمَنِ إِلَهًا يُعْبَدُونَ ﴿٤٥﴾

And whoever makes himself blind against the advice of the *Rahmān*, We assign for him a devil who accompanies him all the time. [36] And they (the devils) prevent such people from the (right) way, while they deem themselves to be on the right path, [37] until when such a person will come to us, he will say (to the devil), "Will that there were the distance of East and West between me and you, because you were the worst companion." [38] And (it will be said to such people,) 'Since you were wrongdoers, it will never benefit you today that you are sharing the punishment with each other.' [39] So, can you (O prophet) make the deaf to hear, or can you show the way to the blind and the one who is in open error? [40] So, even if We take you away, We will surely take vengeance on them. [41] Or (if) We show you (in your life) that (punishment) with which

We have threatened them, then We have full control over them. [42] So, hold fast to that which has been revealed to you. Surely, you are on the straight path. [43] And certainly this (Qur'ān) is a word of honor for you and your people. And you will be questioned. [44] And ask Our messengers whom We sent before you whether We had appointed gods to be worshipped besides Raḥmān. [45]

Commentary

وَمَنْ يَعْشُ عَنْ ذِكْرِ الرَّحْمٰنِ (And whoever makes himself blind against the advice of the Raḥmān, We assign for him a devil who accompanies him all the time - 43:36) It means that whoever knowingly turns a blind eye towards Allah's advice i.e. the Holy Qur'ān and *wahy*, Allah assigns to him a devil who accompanies him all the time in this world to prevent him from virtuous deeds, and to divert him towards evil. When such a man is resurrected in the Hereafter, his devil will also be with him, till they both are pushed in Hell. (Qurṭubī).

We learn from this that the punishment one gets even in this world for turning away from Allah's remembrance is that he gets into bad company and '*shaiṭāns*' (devils), whether from humans or from jinns, keep diverting him from virtues to vices. He commits vices but thinks that he is doing very well. (Qurṭubī). This devil who is assigned to such a person, as mentioned here, is in addition to the '*Shaiṭān*' (Satan) who is attached to every believer and disbeliever, because that '*shaiṭān*' (Satan) does leave the man alone at certain specific times, whereas this devil accompanies him all the time. (Bayān-ul-Qur'ān)

وَلَنْ يَنْفَعَكُمُ الْيَوْمَ (‘Since you were wrongdoers, it will never benefit you today that you are sharing the punishment with each other.’...43:39) There can be two explanations of this verse. One is that since your '*kufr*' and '*shirk*' (disbelief and ascribing partners to Allah) has been proved, your longing in the Hereafter in the words, "Will that this devil had been away from me," will be of no avail, because all of you will be sharing the same punishment.

The other explanation could be that after getting in Hell, your sharing the punishment with the devil will not benefit you. In this world, indeed it happens that when a few people share the same misfortune, everyone's burden of misery becomes somewhat lighter, but there in Hell,

everybody will be so terrorized that nobody will be able to lighten another's misery and hence sharing of the punishment will be of no benefit. (The translation given above is based on this interpretation.)

Good Fame is liked by Islam

وَإِنَّهُ لَذِكْرٌ لَّكَ وَلِقَوْمِكَ (And certainly this Qur'an is a word of honor for you and your people...43:44) The original word used in the text is *dhikr* which here means 'good name' or 'fame'. The verse means that the Noble Qur'an is a matter of great honour and good fame for the Holy Prophet ﷺ and his people. Imām Rāzī has concluded from this verse that good fame is a desirable thing, because Allah Ta'ālā has stated this as a matter of favor and that is why Sayyidnā Ibrāhīm عليه السلام had supplicated:

وَأَجْعَلْ لِي لِسَانَ صِدْقٍ فِي الْآخِرِينَ

(And destine for me a truthful description among the next generations) (26:84)

But one must keep in mind that the good fame is praiseworthy only when it is received as an automatic result of virtuous deeds, but when virtuous deeds are done for the sake of good fame, then it becomes *riyā'* (ostentation) which not only nullifies all the rewards of good deeds, but also renders one guilty of a major sin.

In this verse the words 'your people' have been taken by some exegetes to mean the tribe of Quraish only, thereby proving the superiority of Quraish, whereas 'Allāmah Qurṭubī says that, according to the correct view, these words refer to the whole Ummah of the Holy Prophet ﷺ, irrespective of color or race, and the Noble Qur'an is a matter of honor and good fame for the whole Ummah. (Qurṭubī)

وَسُئِلَ مَنْ أَرْسَلْنَا مِنْ قَبْلِكَ مِنْ رُسُلِنَا (And ask Our messengers whom We sent before you...43:45) A question may arise here: Since all the earlier prophets عليهم السلام had expired at the time of the revelation of this verse, how could the Holy Prophet ﷺ ask any question from his predecessors? Some exegetes have taken the verse in the sense that if, as a miracle, Allah Ta'ālā arranges for the Holy Prophet ﷺ to meet the earlier prophets عليهم السلام, then he should ask them about it. And it is well-established that the Holy Prophet ﷺ met all the preceding prophets عليهم السلام during the Night of Ascension. 'Allāmah Qurṭubī quotes some narrations according to which the Holy Prophet ﷺ asked them this very thing after

leading them in the prayers; but we could not discover the source of these narrations. Most exegetes have, therefore, explained that the verse does not mean to ask the prophets verbally. What is meant by the verse is to consult the divine Scriptures revealed to the earlier prophets, and to ask their learned scholars. And the scriptures of the prophets of Banī Isrā'īl which are available now, despite so many distortions, contain teachings about '*tauḥīd*' (Oneness of Allah) and condemnation of '*shirk*' (associating others with Allah) even today. For example, some excerpts from the Bible are quoted below:

Teachings about Oneness in the Scriptures of the earlier prophets

Here are two quotations from the Scriptures claimed by Jews and Christians to be the 'Pentateuch' or 'Torah' :-

"The Lord has shown you this, to prove to you that he alone is God and that there is no other." (Deuteronomy, 4:35)

and

"Israel, remember this! The Lord—and the Lord alone—is our God. Love the Lord your God with all your heart." (Deuteronomy, 6:4)

The scripture of Shi'yā عليه السلام (known as Isaiah) says,

"I am the Lord; there is no other god. I will give you the strength you need, although you do not know me. I do this so that everyone from one end of the world to the other may know that I am the Lord and that there is no other god." (Isaiah, 45:5,6)

The books claimed by the Christians to be the Gospels contain this statement of Sayyidnā Masīḥ عليه السلام (Jesus Christ):

"Listen, Israel! The Lord our God is the only Lord. Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength." (Mark, 12:29, Matthew 22:36)

It is narrated that once Sayyidnā Masīḥ عليه السلام (Jesus Christ) said the following words during a supplication:

"And eternal life means knowing you, the only true God, and knowing Jesus Christ, whom you sent." (Yuhanna 17:3)^[1]

[1] These excerpts are taken from Good News Bible, Today's English Version, Published by the Bible Societies in 1976. (Muhammad Taqi Usmani)

Verses 46 - 56

وَلَقَدْ أَرْسَلْنَا مُوسَىٰ بِآيَاتِنَا إِلَىٰ فِرْعَوْنَ وَمَلَئِهِ فَقَالَ إِنِّي رَسُولُ رَبِّ
 الْعَالَمِينَ ﴿٤٦﴾ فَلَمَّا جَاءَهُمْ بِآيَاتِنَا إِذَا هُمْ مِنْهَا يَضْحَكُونَ ﴿٤٧﴾
 وَمَا نُرِيهِمْ مِنْ آيَةٍ إِلَّا هِيَ أَكْبَرُ مِنْ أُخْتِهَا وَأَخَذْنَاهُمْ بِالْعَذَابِ
 لَعَلَّهُمْ يَرْجِعُونَ ﴿٤٨﴾ وَقَالُوا يَا أَيُّهُ السَّحِرُ ادْعُ لَنَا رَبَّكَ بِمَا عَهِدَ
 عِنْدَكَ ۚ إِنَّا لَمُهْتَدُونَ ﴿٤٩﴾ فَلَمَّا كَشَفْنَا عَنْهُمْ الْعَذَابَ إِذَا هُمْ
 يَنْكُثُونَ ﴿٥٠﴾ وَنَادَىٰ فِرْعَوْنُ فِي قَوْمِهِ قَالَ يَا قَوْمِ أَلَيْسَ لِي مُلْكُ
 مِصْرَ وَهَذِهِ الْأَنْهَارُ تَجْرِي مِن تَحْتِي ۚ أَفَلَا تُبْصِرُونَ ﴿٥١﴾ أَمْ أَنَا
 خَيْرٌ مِّنْ هَذَا الَّذِي هُوَ مَهِينٌ ۚ وَلَا يَكَادُ يَبِينُ ﴿٥٢﴾ فَلَوْلَا أَلْقَىٰ
 عَلَيْهِ آسُورَةٌ مِّنْ ذَهَبٍ أَوْ جَاءَ مَعَهُ الْمَلَائِكَةُ مُقْتَرِنِينَ ﴿٥٣﴾
 فَاسْتَخَفَّ قَوْمَهُ فَطَاعُوهُ ۗ إِنَّهُمْ كَانُوا قَوْمًا فَسِيقِينَ ﴿٥٤﴾ فَلَمَّا
 اسْفُونا انْتَقَمْنَا مِنْهُمْ فَأَغْرَقْنَاهُمْ أَجْمَعِينَ ﴿٥٥﴾ فَجَعَلْنَاهُمْ سَلَفًا
 وَمَثَلًا لِّلْآخِرِينَ ﴿٥٦﴾

And We sent Mūsā with Our signs to Fir'aun (Pharaoh) and his chiefs; so he said, "I am the messenger of the Lord of the worlds." [46] So, when he came to them with Our signs, they at once started laughing at them. [47] And We did not show them a sign, but it used to be greater than its predecessor. And We seized them with punishment, so that they may return. [48] And they said, "O magician, pray for us to your Lord by the covenant He has made with you; we will certainly come to guidance." [49] Then, when We removed the punishment from them, they at once broke their word. [50] And Fir'aun proclaimed among his people, saying, "Does not the kingdom of Egypt belong to me? And these rivers are flowing right underneath me. Do you, then, not discern? [51] Or (do you not see that) I am much better than this one (Mūsā) who is worthless and can hardly express himself? [52] So why were the bracelets of gold not sent down to him, or (why) did the angels

not come along with him as companions?" [53] Thus he made fool of his people, and they obeyed him. Surely they were a sinful people. [54] So, when they provoked Our anger, We took vengeance on them, and drowned them all together, [55] and made them a people of the past, and an example for the later generations. [56]

Commentary

Incidents related to Sayyidnā Mūsā عليه السلام have been stated by the Qur'ān at many places repeatedly, and the incidents referred to in the present verses have been described in detail in Sūrah Al-A'rāf. The reason for reminding these incidents here is to show that the objection of the infidels of Makkah that the Holy Prophet ﷺ is not a wealthy man is not a new objection; Fir'aun had expressed the same doubt against Sayyidnā Mūsā عليه السلام and his prophethood. His contention was that being the ruler of Egypt, and owner of the palaces and rivers flowing beneath them, how could Mūsā عليه السلام claim to be a prophet against him. But just as Fir'aun's disbelief could be of no avail to him, and he got drowned along with his people, this objection of 'kuffār' of Makkah, too, will not save them from the divine punishment in this world, or in the Hereafter.

وَلَا يَكَادُ يُبِينُ (and can hardly express himself - 43:52). Although as a result of his own supplication, the stammering of Sayyidnā Mūsā عليه السلام had been removed by Allah Ta'ālā, Fir'aun remembered his previous state only, and hence this aspersion. And it is possible also that by saying this, Fir'aun did not mean stammering in speech, but he meant that Sayyidnā Mūsā عليه السلام could not put forward adequate logical arguments to satisfy him, although this was nothing but a false accusation, because Sayyidnā Mūsā عليه السلام had completely overwhelmed Fir'aun through his arguments and proofs against which he had no answer. (Tafsīr Kabīr and Rūḥ-ul-Ma'ānī).

فَاسْتَحَفَّ قَوْمَهُ (Thus he made fool of his people - 43:54). According to the Arabic expression, this sentence may be translated in two ways; the translation adopted in the text above is based on one of them. The second one may be: "He (Fir'aun) easily made his people to follow him". (Rūḥ-ul-Ma'ānī)

فَلَمَّا اسْفُوتْنَا (So, when they provoked our anger, - 43:55). Since Allah Almighty is pure of the states of anger and sorrow, the meaning is that their behavior caused Us to decide that they should be punished.

(Ruḥ-ul-Ma'āni)

Verses 57 - 65

وَلَمَّا ضُرِبَ ابْنُ مَرْيَمَ مَثَلًا إِذَا قَوْمُكَ مِنْهُ يَصِدُّونَ ﴿٥٧﴾ وَقَالُوا
 ءَ الْيَهُتْنَا خَيْرٌ أَمْ هُوَ مَا ضَرَبُوهُ لَكَ إِلَّا جَدَلًا بَلْ هُمْ قَوْمٌ خَصِمُونَ
 ﴿٥٨﴾ إِنْ هُوَ إِلَّا عَبْدٌ أَنْعَمْنَا عَلَيْهِ وَجَعَلْنَاهُ مَثَلًا لِّبَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ ﴿٥٩﴾
 وَلَوْ نَشَاءُ لَجَعَلْنَا مِنْكُمْ مَلَائِكَةً فِي الْأَرْضِ يَخْلُفُونَ ﴿٦٠﴾ وَإِنَّهُ
 لَعِلْمٌ لِّلسَّاعَةِ فَلَا تَمْتَرَنَّ بِهَا وَاتَّبِعُونِ ط هَذَا صِرَاطٌ مُسْتَقِيمٌ ﴿٦١﴾
 وَلَا يَصُدَّنَّكُمُ الشَّيْطَانُ ءَ إِنَّهُ لَكُمْ عَدُوٌّ مُّبِينٌ ﴿٦٢﴾ وَلَمَّا جَاءَ
 عِيسَى بِالْبَيِّنَاتِ قَالَ قَدْ جِئْتُكُمْ بِالْحِكْمَةِ وَلِأُبَيِّنَ لَكُمْ بَعْضَ الَّذِي
 تَخْتَلِفُونَ فِيهِ ءَ فَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَأَطِيعُوا لِي ﴿٦٣﴾ إِنَّ اللَّهَ هُوَ رَبِّي وَرَبُّكُمْ
 فَاعْبُدُوهُ ط هَذَا صِرَاطٌ مُسْتَقِيمٌ ﴿٦٤﴾ فَاخْتَلَفَ الْأَحْزَابُ مِنْ
 بَيْنِهِمْ ءَ فَوَيْلٌ لِّلَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا مِنْ عَذَابِ يَوْمِ الْيَمِّ ﴿٦٥﴾

And when the example of the son of Maryam was cited, your people started at once shouting at it (in joy), [57] and said, "Are Our gods better or is he?" And they did not cite it but for the sake of disputation. Rather, they are a quarrelsome people. [58] He (‘Isā) is no more than a slave (of Allah) whom We favored and made an example for the children of Isra’il. [59] And if We will, We may create angels from you who succeed you on the earth. [60] And he (‘Isā) is a source of knowledge of the Hour (the Day of Judgment); so do not be in doubt about it, and follow me. This is the straight way. [61] And let not the shaitan (Satan) prevent you (from following this way). He is surely an open enemy for you. [62] And when ‘Isā came with clear proofs, he said, "I have come to you with wisdom, and to explain to you some of those matters in which you differ. So, fear Allah, and obey me. [63] Surely, it is Allah who is my Lord and your Lord; so worship Him. This is the straight way." [64] Then different groups, out of them, fell into disagreement. So, woe to the wrongdoers

because of the punishment of a painful day. [65]

Commentary

(And when the example of the son of Maryam was cited, your people started at once shouting at it [in joy]...43:57). Exegetes have narrated three events as background of the revelation of these verses. One is that once the Holy Prophet ﷺ had addressed the tribe of Quraish and said, "O people of Quraish! there is no good in whatever is worshipped beside Allah." The polytheists responded by saying, "The Christians worship Sayyidnā 'Īsā عليه السلام, although you yourself say that he was a virtuous slave of Allah, and His prophet." These verses were then revealed in reply to this objection (Qurṭubī).

The second narration is that the objection of the infidels related to the following verse of the Holy Qur'an:

إِنَّكُمْ وَمَا تَعْبُدُونَ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ حَصَبُ جَهَنَّمَ

"Surely, you and whatever you worship other than Allah are the fuel of Jahannam." (21:98)

When this verse was revealed, 'Abdullah Ibn-uz-ziba'ra claimed that he had the proper answer to this verse which was that the Christians worship Sayyidnā Masih ('Īsā عليه السلام) and Jews worship Sayyidnā 'Uzair عليه السلام, so will they both become fuel of Hell? Upon hearing this, the polytheists of Quraish became very joyful, and Allah then revealed the following verse of the Holy Qur'an:

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ سَبَقَتْ لَهُمْ مِنَّا الْحُسْنَىٰ أُولَٰئِكَ عَنْهَا مُبْعَدُونَ

"Surely, those for whom the good (news) from Us has come earlier shall be kept away from it." (21:101)

The above verses of Sūrah Zukhruf was also revealed in this context. (Ibn Kathīr, etc.,)

The third narration is that once the pagans of Makkah expressed the absurd thought that the Holy Prophet ﷺ wanted to claim godhead for himself, so that he might be worshipped like Sayyidnā 'Īsā عليه السلام is worshipped by the Christians; these verses were revealed in that context.

In reality, there is no conflict between these three narrations. The infidels will have said all the three things, and in reply Allah Ta'ālā

revealed these verses in such a comprehensive manner that took care of all the three objections. The answer to the last objection is quite clear in these verses as to those who started worshipping Sayyidnā 'Īsā عليه السلام did not do so in obedience to any Divine command, nor had Sayyidnā 'Īsā عليه السلام ever desired it for himself, nor does the Qur'an support it. Their misconception was based on the miraculous birth of Sayyidnā 'Īsā عليه السلام without a father which was, according to them, a sign of his being god or a son of God. The Holy Qur'an has refuted this misconceived argument. How is it then possible that the Holy Prophet ﷺ will claim Godhead in imitation of the Christians?

The gist of the objection mentioned in the first and second narrations is essentially the same. The statement in the Qur'an that all those who are worshipped except Allah will become fuel for Hell or the statement of the Holy Prophet ﷺ that there is no good in whatever is worshipped except Allah, refer to the lifeless objects of worship, such as idols or those living beings who directed their followers towards their own worship, or who liked to be worshipped, such as *shaitāns*, Fir'aun, Namrūd, etc.. So Sayyidnā 'Īsā عليه السلام is obviously not included in this category, since at no stage did he like to be worshipped. Christians do not worship him because of any direction having been given by Sayyidnā 'Īsā عليه السلام, rather they were misled and started worshipping him by deducing the wrong conclusion from his birth without a father which was a sample of Allah's power to show to the people that Allah does not need even any apparent cause or means to create something. This worship of Sayyidnā 'Īsā عليه السلام by Christians was not only irrational, but also against his own teachings, because he had always preached '*tauḥīd*' (Oneness of Allah); his own disgust against being worshipped simply does not allow his inclusion in the ranks of false gods.

وَلَوْ نَشَاءُ لَجَعَلْنَا مِنْكُمْ مَلَائِكَةً فِي الْأَرْضِ يَخْلُقُونَ (and if we will, We may create angels from you who succeed you on the earth...43:60) This is in reply to the gravely mistaken conclusion drawn by Christians from the miraculous birth of Sayyidnā 'Īsā عليه السلام without a father as a result of which they attributed godhead to him, and started worshipping him. Allah Ta'ālā states to controvert their argument that Sayyidnā 'Īsā's عليه السلام birth was merely a demonstration of His power, and He has the power to do even more supernatural things like creating Sayyidnā 'Ādam عليه السلام without

father and mother. And if He wills, He may do as unprecedented things as causing angels to be born out of human beings.

وَإِنَّهُ لَعَلَّمَ لِسَاءَةَ (And he (ﷺ) is a source of knowledge of the Hour [the day of judgement] - 43:61). This verse has been explained in two different ways. One is that Sayyidnā 'Īsā (ﷺ) being born without a father is a proof to the fact that Allah Almighty can create people without apparent causes. Thus resurrecting the dead is not at all difficult for Him. But most exegetes have taken this verse in another sense. According to them it means that the descent of Sayyidnā 'Īsā (ﷺ) from the sky is a sign of the Doomsday. And his coming to this world again in its last days and killing Dajjāl (the Antichrist) is proved by *mutawātir aḥādīth*. Some details on this subject have already been given in the explanation of the verse (3:54,55) of Sūrah 'Āl-'Imrān, (See V,2, pp.76 onward of this book) and in Sūrah Nisā' 3:54,55 (See V. 2, PP. 622 onward of this book) and some in Sūrah Al-Mā'idah (5:110). For more details one should refer to the author's book "At-Taṣrīḥ bi mā tawātara fī nuzūl-il-Masīḥ" in Arabic and "مسح مؤود کی پہچان" in Urdu.

وَلَا يَنبَغِي لَكُمْ بَعْضُ الَّذِي تَخْتَلِفُونَ فِيهِ (and to explain to you some of those matters in which you differ...43:63) Since Banū Isrā'īl were drowned in arrogance and obstinacy, they had tampered with the Divine laws. Sayyidnā 'Īsā (ﷺ) disclosed the reality of such distortions. The words 'some matters' are used because some other matters were purely of mundane nature. He might have not felt the need to deal with those differences. (Bayān-ul-Qur'ān).

Verses 66 - 77

هَلْ يَنْظُرُونَ إِلَّا السَّاعَةَ أَنْ تَأْتِيَهُمْ بَغْتَةً وَهُمْ لَا يَشْعُرُونَ ﴿٦٦﴾
 الْآخِلَاءُ يَوْمَئِذٍ بَعْضُهُمْ لِبَعْضٍ عَدُوٌّ إِلَّا الْمُتَّقِينَ ﴿٦٧﴾ ط
 لَا خَوْفٌ عَلَيْكُمُ الْيَوْمَ وَلَا أَنْتُمْ تَحْزَنُونَ ﴿٦٨﴾ ع
 وَكَانُوا مُسْلِمِينَ ﴿٦٩﴾ ح
 أَدْخُلُوا الْجَنَّةَ أَنْتُمْ وَأَزْوَاجُكُمْ تُحْبَرُونَ
 ﴿٧٠﴾ يَطَافُ عَلَيْهِمْ بِصِحَافٍ مِّنْ ذَهَبٍ وَأَكْوَابٍ وَفِيهَا

مَا تَشْتَهِيهِ الْإِنْفُسُ وَتَلُدُّ الْأَعْيُنُ ۚ وَأَنْتُمْ فِيهَا خَالِدُونَ ﴿٧١﴾ وَتَلَكُ
 الْجَنَّةُ الَّتِي أَوْرَثْتُمُوهَا بِمَا كُنْتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٧٢﴾ لَكُمْ فِيهَا فَاكِهَةٌ
 كَثِيرَةٌ مِنْهَا تَأْكُلُونَ ﴿٧٣﴾ إِنَّ الْمُجْرِمِينَ فِي عَذَابٍ جَهَنَّمَ خَالِدُونَ
 ﴿٧٤﴾ لَا يَفْتَرَعْنَهُمْ وَهُمْ فِيهِ مُبْلِسُونَ ﴿٧٥﴾ وَمَا ظَلَمْنَاهُمْ وَلَكِنْ
 كَانُوا هُمُ الظَّالِمِينَ ﴿٧٦﴾ وَنَادُوا يَمْلِكُ لِيَقْضِ عَلَيْنَا رَبُّكَ ۗ قَالَ
 إِنَّكُمْ مُكْثِرُونَ ﴿٧٧﴾

They are waiting for nothing but for the Hour to come upon them suddenly, while they will not even imagine (it). [66] Friends, on that day, will become enemies to one another, except the God-fearing, [67] (to whom it will be said) "O my slaves, there is no fear for you today, nor will you grieve- [68]-(that is, O) those (slaves) who believed in Our signs, and remained obedient. [69]-- Enter the Paradise, you and your spouses, showered with bliss." [70] Circulated among them will be the bowls of gold, and glasses. And therein will be whatever souls desire and that in which eyes delight. "And you will be living in it for ever. [71] And that is the Paradise that you are made to inherit because of what you used to do. [72] For you there are fruits in abundance from which you will eat." [73] The sinners (on the other hand) will be in the punishment of Jahannam, living there for ever. [74] It will not be lightened for them, and they will be there, devoid of all hopes. [75] And We did not do injustice to them, rather, they themselves were the unjust. [76] And they will call (Malik, the keeper of the hell,) "O Malik, let your Lord do away with us." He will say, "You have to stay on." [77]

Commentary

The only real friendship is that which is in the sake of Allah

الْآخِلَاءُ يَوْمَئِذٍ بَعْضُهُمْ لِبَعْضٍ عَدُوٌّ إِلَّا الْمُتَّقِينَ (Friends, on that day, will become enemies to one another, except the God-fearing 43:67). This verse tells us plainly that the friendly relations in which we take so much pride in this world, and for which we don't even care about *ḥalāl* (permitted) and *ḥarām* (unlawful), will be of no use on the Day of judgment, rather they will turn into enmity. In this connection, Ḥāfīz Ibn Kathīr has reproduced

a discourse of Sayyidnā 'Alī عليه السلام narrated by 'Abdur Razzāq in his Muṣannaf and by Ibn Abī Ḥātim regarding two Muslim friends and two Non-Muslim friends. One of the Muslim friends died and when he was given the glad tidings of Paradise, he recollected his friend and supplicated in his favour: "O Allah! That friend of mine used to advise me to obey You and to obey the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, he used to direct me towards virtues and to prevent me from vices, and kept on reminding me that one day I would have to meet You. So O Allah! Do not misguide him after me, so that he may also see the scenes of Paradise as You have shown to me, and be pleased with him, as you have been with me." In reply, it will be said to him, "Do not worry, if you know what reward I have stored for your friend, you will weep less and laugh more." Later, when the friend will also have died, both the souls will get together and Allah Ta'ālā will direct them that each one of them should praise the other. Thereupon, each one of them will say about the other that he is the best brother, best companion and the best friend.

As against this, when one of the Non-Muslim friends will die, and he will be told that he will go to Hell, he will recollect his friend and will supplicate thus "O Allah! That friend of mine used to insist upon me to disobey You and your messenger, used to direct me towards vices and used to prevent me from virtues and used to tell me that I would never meet You. So O Allah! Do not give him guidance after me, so that he may also see the scenes of Hell, as You have shown to me, and be displeased with him just as You have been displeased with me." Later, when the other friend will also have died, both their souls will be get together, and they will be directed to praise the other. Then each one of them will say about the other, "He is the worst brother, worst companion and worst friend. (Ibn Kathīr p. 134, v.4)

Therefore the best friendship, in respect of this world as well as the Hereafter, is the one that is for the sake of Allah. Many are the merits stated in '*aḥādīth*' for those two Muslims who love each other purely for the sake of Allah. One of these merits is that they will be in the shade of the "Arsh" (Throne) of Allah. And 'love for the sake of Allah' means to love someone because he is a true follower of the religion prescribed by Allah. As such, it includes sincere love for teachers of religious subjects, spiritual guides, reformers, religious scholars and devotees of Allah, as

well as for all the Muslims.

Verses 78 -89

لَقَدْ جِئْنَاكُمْ بِالْحَقِّ وَلَكِنَّ أَكْثَرَكُمْ لِلْحَقِّ كَرِهُونَ ﴿٧٨﴾ أَمْ أBRَمُوا
 أَمْرًا فَإِنَّا مُبْرِمُونَ ﴿٧٩﴾ أَمْ يَحْسَبُونَ أَنَّا لَا نَسْمَعُ سِرَّهُمْ وَنَجْوَاهُمْ ط
 بلى وَرُسُلْنَا لَدَيْهِمْ يَكْتُبُونَ ﴿٨٠﴾ قُلْ إِن كَانَ لِلرَّحْمَنِ وَلَدٌ فَأَنَا
 أَوَّلُ الْعَبِيدِينَ ﴿٨١﴾ سُبْحَانَ رَبِّ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ رَبِّ الْعَرْشِ
 عَمَّا يَصِفُونَ ﴿٨٢﴾ فَذَرَهُمْ يَخُوضُوا وَيَلْعَبُوا حَتَّى يُلَاقُوا يَوْمَهُمُ
 الَّذِي يُوعَدُونَ ﴿٨٣﴾ وَهُوَ الَّذِي فِي السَّمَاءِ إِلَهٌ وَفِي الْأَرْضِ إِلَهٌ ط
 وَهُوَ الْحَكِيمُ الْعَلِيمُ ﴿٨٤﴾ وَتَبَرَكَ الَّذِي لَهُ مُلْكُ السَّمَوَاتِ
 وَالْأَرْضِ وَمَا بَيْنَهُمَا ۗ وَعِنْدَهُ عِلْمُ السَّاعَةِ ۗ وَإِلَيْهِ تُرْجَعُونَ ﴿٨٥﴾
 وَلَا يَمْلِكُ الَّذِينَ يَدْعُونَ مِنْ دُونِهِ الشَّفَاعَةَ إِلَّا مَنْ شَهِدَ بِالْحَقِّ
 وَهُمْ يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٨٦﴾ وَلَئِنْ سَأَلْتَهُمْ مَنْ خَلَقَهُمْ لَيَقُولَنَّ اللَّهُ فَاَنى
 يُؤْفَكُونَ ﴿٨٧﴾ وَقِيلَ لَهُ رَبِّ إِنَّ هَؤُلَاءِ قَوْمٌ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ ﴿٨٨﴾ فَاصْفَحْ
 عَنْهُمْ وَقُلْ سَلَّمَ ط فَسَوْفَ يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٨٩﴾

Indeed We have brought to you the truth, but it is the truth that most of you detest. [78] Is it that they have firmly resolved to do something (harmful to Our messenger)? Then, We have firmly resolved (to frustrate their plan.) [79] Do they think that We do not hear their secrets and their whispers? Why not? And Our messengers (angels) are with them who record. [80] Say, "Had there been a son for the *Rahmān*, I would have been the first to worship." [81] Pure is the Lord of the heavens and the earth, the Lord of the Throne, from what they describe (about Him). [82] So, let them indulge (in their fallacy) and play, until they face their Day that they are promised. [83] And He is the One who is God to be worshipped in the sky, and God to be worshipped on the earth. And He is the Wise, the

All-Knowing. [84] And Glorious is the One to whom belongs the kingdom of the heavens and the earth and whatever lies between them. And with Him is the knowledge of the Hour; and towards Him you are to be returned. [85] And those whom they invoke besides Him have no power to intercede, but those who bear witness to the truth, while they have knowledge (may intercede for the believers with Allah's permission). [86] And if you ask them as to who has created them, they will certainly say, "Allah". Then, to where are they driven back (by their false desires)? [87] And (Allah has the knowledge) of his (prophet's) saying, "O my Lord, these are a people who do not believe." [88] ¹ So, turn away from them, and say, "Salām!" (good-bye!). Then, soon they will come to know. [89]

Commentary

قُلْ إِنْ كَانَ لِلرَّحْمَنِ وَلَدٌ فَأَنَا أَوَّلُ الْعَابِدِينَ (Had there been a son for the *Rahmān*, I would have been the first to worship - 43:81) It does not mean that, God forbid, there is any possibility of *Rahmān* (Allah) having offspring. What is really being said is that the Holy Prophet ﷺ is not denying your beliefs due to enmity or obstinacy, but because they are illogical. If precise logical arguments could prove the existence of offspring of Allah, he would certainly have accepted it. But every intellectual argument contradicts this possibility, and therefore there is no question of accepting it. This tells us that it is lawful, rather desirable, to declare during a debate with erring people that if their claim had been proved by strong arguments, it would have been accepted, because such a manner of speech may sometimes soften the heart of the opponent and may persuade him to accept the truth.

وَقِيلَ يَا رَبِّ إِنَّ هَؤُلَاءِ قَوْمٌ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ (And [Allah has the knowledge] of His prophet's saying, "O my Lord, these are a people who do not believe." 43:88) The point made by this sentence is that there are very serious reasons for Allah's wrath descending upon these infidels. On the one

(1) This translation is based on the construction adopted by many exegetes, including Maulānā Ashraf 'Alī Thanawī رحمه الله تعالى. However, according to Imām Rāzī, the translation will be as follows, " And (remember the time) of his (Prophet's) saying....." This rendering seems to be closer to the text in view of the grammatical construction of the verse. (For details, please see At-tafsīr-ul-kabīr, by Imām Rāzī v.27, p.234) (Muhammad Taqi Usmani)

hand, there are their severe crimes themselves, and on the other when the Messenger ﷺ, who has been sent as a "blessing for the world" and "interceder for the sinners", himself complains against them and says that these people do not believe, despite repeated good counsels given to them, it indicates that they must have agonized the Holy Prophet ﷺ to an extreme extent, otherwise "the blessing for the worlds" would not have made such a plaint merely on an ordinary hurt.

It should be noted that the present verse has been construed in different ways. The above translation is based on the construction adopted by Maulānā Ashraf 'Alī Thanawī رحمه الله تعالى. Various other constructions are given in Rūḥ-ul-Ma'ānī.

وَقُلْ سَلَامٌ (and say, Salām [good-bye]. Then soon they will come to know---43:89). At the end of the Sūrah, the same advice has been given to the Holy Prophet ﷺ that is always given to every preacher of truth. The gist of the advice is that one may reply to the arguments and doubts of the opponents, but when they start talking ignorantly, foolishly or are involved in hurling abuses, then instead of replying in their language, one should keep quiet. And the instruction to say Salām does not mean that "*Assalāmu 'alaikum*" is to be said to them, because this salutation is not permissible for any non-Muslim; rather it is an idiomatic expression for parting of ways. As such, the view of those who deduce from this verse that saying "*Assalāmu 'alaikum*" to non-Muslims is permissible does not carry much weight. (Rūḥ-ul-Ma'ānī).

Alḥamdulillāh
The Commentary on
Sūrah Az-Zukhruf (The Gold)
Ends here